

Professor B. B. LAL

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October 15, 2015

Dear Dr. Adams,

This has a reference to the amendments to California State Text Books, forwarded to your organization by Uberoi Foundation Institute for Curriculum Advancement, under the signatures of Professor Shiva Bajpai and Acharya Agmuganathaswami.

I fully endorse the Amendments at Serial Nos. 1-15, since I can claim expertise on these topics. I have no comments to offer on Nos. 16 onwards.

I am also attaching a copy of my bio-data for your information;

With regards,

Yours sincerely

(B. B. Lal)

Dr. Thomas Adams

Bio-data of Professor B. B. LAL

Born on May 2, 1921 in a village called Baidora in Jhansi District, Uttar Pradesh, Braj Basi Lal had a very brilliant academic career all through, culminating in a first Class first in Sanskrit from the University of Allahabad in 1943. During 1944-45 he received training in field-archaeology under Dr. (later knighted) Mortimer Wheeler, the then Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). In 1946 he was placed first in order of merit amongst ten candidates selected by the Union Public Service Commission for the posts of officers in ASI. His first assignment was to assist Dr. Wheeler in the latter's excavations at Harappa in 1946. Soon he went up the ladder in the Survey and became its Director General in 1968 at the early age of 47.

However, the heavy administrative work as the DGA left him with very little time to carry on his research work which was very close to his heart. Thus, in 1972, he took voluntary retirement from the Survey and joined Jiwaji University, Gwalior as a Professor. In 1976 he joined as a National Fellow the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, of which he later became the Director. He left the Institute in 1986 and has since been busy carrying on his research work and writing books. Not only is he running his 94th year now but is also racing through his publications, the latest being, *The R̥gvedic People*, in which, using the evidence of literature, archaeology, hydrology and radiocarbon method of dating, he has categorically demonstrated that the R̥gvedic people were neither 'Invaders' nor 'Immigrants', but were the 'sons of the soil'.

Amongst his other noteworthy books are: *Excavations at Śrīṅgaverapura, Vol. I* (1993); *The Earliest Civilization of South Asia* (1997); *India 1947-97: New light on the Indus Civilization* (1998); *The Sarasvatī Flows On: The Continuity of Indian Culture* (2002); *The Homeland of the Aryans: Evidence of R̥gvedic Flora and Fauna & Archaeology* (2005); *Rāma: His Historicity, Mandir and Setu* (2008); *How Deep are the Roots of Indian Civilization? Archaeology Answers* (2009); *Piecing Together: Memoirs of an Archaeologist* (2011); *Excavations at Bharadvāja Āśrama* (2011); and *Historicity of the Mahābhārata: Evidence of Literature, Art and Archaeology* (2013). Besides books, Professor Lal has published about 150 seminal papers in eminent research journals in India and abroad – USA, UK, France, Italy, Egypt, Pakistan, Japan, etc.

Professor Lal is renowned for his skill in excavation. The Report on his very first (1948) excavation, viz. at Śisupālgarh in Odisha, was reviewed in *Antiquity* (UK) by the distinguished Professor Stuart Piggott who commented as follows: "The interim report on Sisupalgarh is a model of its kind, admirably arranged and illustrated. ... Several of us, the reviewer in particular, have been sharply critical of the field-work reports on oriental sites. ... And it is now clear that with such work as that of Mr. Lal reviewed above, India is leading the way..."

Professor Lal's work at Kalibangan in Rajasthan has brought to light not only a prosperous city of the Mature Harappan Civilization but also an Early Harappan (circa 2800 BCE) furrowed agricultural field, which is the earliest ever revealed through an excavation. Around 2700 BCE the Early Harappan settlement had to be abandoned because of an earthquake which, once again, is the earliest ever recorded in an excavation.

The excavations at Hastināpura, Indraprastha, etc. have established that the *Mahābhārata* was not a figment of imagination but had a basis in historical reality, even though in the course of time that epic got inflated from a mere 8,800 verses to 100,000 verses. Likewise, his excavations at Ayodhyā, Śrīngaverapura, etc. have shown that the *Rāmāyaṇa* too has a basis in history. In 1961 he conducted excavations in Egypt, which threw valuable light on Egyptian prehistory.

Professor Lal has many honours to his credit. He has been a Chairman/ Member of several committees of UNESCO. In 1979 Nava Nālandā Mahāvihāra honoured him with the title of *Vidyāvāridhi*. In 1982, Mithila Viśvavidyālaya conferred on him the title of *Mahāmahopādhyāya*. In 1994, he was awarded D. Litt. (*honoris causa*) by Institute of Archaeology, St. Petersburg, Russia. The same year he was elected President, World Archaeological Congress. He has been honoured in different years by the Indian Science Congress and Asiatic Society, Bombay. In 2000, the president of India honoured him with ***Padma Bhūṣaṇa***.